

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A wheeled carrier device, said device comprising:

a support base structure including a plurality of upwardly projecting stub walls defining a side elevational profile and an outer perimeter; and

at least one wheel support unit affixed to said support base; said wheel support unit comprising a wheel having an outer periphery, defining a plane and having a central axis of rotation, and said wheel support unit being movable between a first, operative position wherein said wheel is erected to provide rolling support for said support base and wherein the plane defined by said wheel support unit extends substantially orthogonally to the side elevational profile of the support base, and a second, stowed position, the plane defined by said wheel of said wheel support unit being swept through an angle during movement of said wheel support unit between said first and second positions such that the plane defined by said wheel in the second position of said wheel support unit is parallel with and substantially within the side elevational profile of said support base; and

said wheel's central axis of rotation is wholly within, and the wheel's periphery is substantially within, the support base perimeter in said second, stowed position; and

at least one rigid handle secured to the carrier device, and movable from a first operative position, to a stowed position closely adjacent to the support base, substantially within the side elevational profile of the carrier device; and

at least one underside support which is movable from a first, operative position substantially orthogonal to the side elevational profile of the device support base, wherein the underside support affords support between the device support base and a rolling surface, to a second, stowed position substantially within the side elevational profile of said carrier device, and being substantially disposed within the outer perimeter defined by the support base; and

releasable latching means, for positively latching said at least one wheel support unit, said at least one handle, and said at least one underside support in both of said

first and second positions thereof.

2. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said handle means comprise a pair of substantially elongate handle members, each one independently manipulable.

3. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said at least one underside support comprises a pair of support members, each one independently manipulable.

4. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the positive latching of said at least one underside support in its operative position additionally serves to positively latch said at least one handle in the handle's operative position, and movement of the underside support to its stowed position correspondingly releases said underside support permitting its movement to said stowed position.

5. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the positive latching of said at least one handle in its operative position additionally serves to positively latch said at least one underside support in the underside support's operative position, and movement of the handle to its stowed position correspondingly releases and permits movement of said underside support to said stowed position.

6. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the at least one wheel support unit further includes:

at least one arm structure mounted to the central axis of rotation of said wheel support unit;

at least a portion of the at least one wheel support unit further includes at least one brace;

in a first, operative position said brace of said wheel support unit at least partly abuts said support base, and in a second, stowed position at least a part of said brace is detached from said abutment to said support base.

7. A device in accordance with claim 1 in which at least one wheel and its central axis of rotation are directed in an inward direction in a second, stowed position in relation to the at least one underside support.
8. A device in accordance with claim 6 wherein at least one part of said brace is at least partly mounted to the underside of the device support base in said first position, causing gravitational force from downwardly applied weight to the device support base to maintain said first, operative wheel support unit position.
9. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least one user-controlled wheel braking means is mounted to the device.
10. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the at least one wheel support unit is fixated against axial rotation in said first, operative, latched position and when unlatched from said position, said at least one wheel is rotated along its axis of rotation and moved into a second, stowed position substantially parallel with the support base, substantially within the side elevational profile of said support base.
11. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the latch means which latches and releases the at least one wheel support unit in both said first and second positions is one and the same means.
12. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the wheel support unit latch means is recessed within the side elevational profile of the support base of said device.
13. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the wheel support unit latch means is mounted to the wheel support unit.
14. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said wheel support unit latching means includes at least one spring-biased latch mounted to the wheel support unit.

15. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said wheel support unit latching means includes at least one spring-biased latch mounted to the support base.
16. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said wheel support unit latching means includes at least one sliding member mounted to the wheel support unit.
17. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said wheel support unit latching means includes at least one resiliently movable member mounted to the wheel unit.
18. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said wheel support unit latching means includes at least one resiliently movable member mounted to the support base.
19. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said support base is designed to hold general cargo.
20. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said support base is designed to hold at least one person.
21. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein a frame structure is at least partly affixed to the support base, and at least partly retains the movable wheel support unit structure, at least part of a handle, and at least part of at least one underside support.
22. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein a friction element extends from not less than the central axis of rotation, along the radius of said wheel and across at least a portion of said wheel intended to contact the rolling surface and functions as a friction element, and in the operative position, the carrier device is at least partly tilted, and said friction element is caused to engage the rolling surface to brace the carrier device against rolling movement to facilitate cargo discharge.

23. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the at least one handle is a substantially u-shaped handle.
24. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the handle comprises at least two handle elements and each element has at least two stages which stages are both extensible and retractable.
25. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the wheel support unit wheel includes at least a partial cowl which does not contact the rolling surface when the device components are in the operative position, and when the device is moved into a second, partly tilted position, the cowl is moved into a position in friction with the rolling surface, enabling dumping of device cargo without rolling movement of the at least one wheel.
26. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least one handle comprises at least two stages and at least one of said two stages pivots in relation to the support base; and
said pivotable at least one stage is latched against movement in the first, operative position at least partly contiguous to said support base, and said pivotable stage of said handle pivots in relation to the carrier device, and moves into a second stowed position contiguous to the support base.
27. A device in accordance with claim 26 wherein the pivot motion of said stage is near to 180 degrees in a plane generally under the support base.
28. A device in accordance with claim 26 wherein said handle stage pivot motion is near to 180 degrees, along a plane horizontal with the side elevational profile of the side of the device.
29. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the handle includes at least two

stages and at least one extensible second stage of said handle is latched and secured in a first, operative position by a cylindrically shaped rotatable ring, and further rotational movement of said ring effects release of said second stage of said handle from the first, operative position, and said stage is retracted into a second, stowed position and said rotatable ring is rotated to secure both stages of the handle in the retracted, stowed position.

30. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the handle comprises at least two stages and one stage is extensible in relation to said other at least one stage, and in a first, operative position at least one stage is maintained in extended relation to the other stage by virtue of a resiliently maintained détente, and upon manual manipulation of the détente, said one extensible stage is retracted into a second, stowed position inside said at least one other stage of the handle.

31. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said at least one underside support with near to a 90 degree angle shape foot portion is orthogonal to the underside support base, and such 90 degree angle shape is in the direction nearest to the first, operative handle side position of said device, which 90 degree shaping prevents the operative carrier device from unintended tilting toward the handle side.

32. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said underside supports comprise at least two generally matching supports which in the first, operative position are orthogonal to the underside of the support base and in said second, stowed position, each said underside support is pivoted and moved within the side elevational profile to the underside of the said carrier device.

33. A device in accordance with claim 32 wherein said underside supports at least partially overlay each other in the said second, stowed position.

34. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said underside supports comprise

at least two matching elements which in a first, operative position are orthogonal to the support base of said device, and in a second, stowed position such supports are pivoted at least near to 180 degrees to a stowed position along the perimeter of the device support base where they are positively latched.

35. A device in accordance with claim 34 wherein said stowed underside supports serve as handles for lifting or manipulating the stowed carrier device.

36. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the underside support is comprised of at least one u-shaped underside support.

37. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least one of said underside supports, in said second, stowed position, is resiliently retained to at least part of the outer perimeter of the base of said device.

38. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least one bracing support is mounted to at least a portion of the wheel support unit and to a portion of the perimeter of the support base.

39. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the cargo retaining base structure of the carrier device includes a multiplicity of openings.

40. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the support base retention base is constructed of a material which is at least partly flexible.

41. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the upwardly projecting stub walls include a multiplicity of openings.

42. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said upwardly projecting stub walls are constructed of at least a partly flexible material.

43. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the base includes receiving portions which permit selective removal and retention of equipment.

44. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein one of at least two of said devices nests inside the perimeter of the other device, when both devices are in their second, stowed positions.

45. A device in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least one of said carrier device components is in the first operative position, and another at least one of said carrier device components are in the second, stowed position, and the said stowed carrier device is nested inside the base of the operative carrier device.